

The total population of the town is estimated at 2,450.

The total number of births during the year was 32.

The total number of deaths was 31.

The differentiation between male and female tuberculosis cases is:-

Males	...	21
Females	...	16

The Water Supply of the town is in quality very good, but in quantity insufficient. I understand that plans are in existence to rectify this as soon as possible.

The state of the Washford river, running through the town is most unsatisfactory, and this appears to be due to effluence from the Mansborough Paper Mills.

I understand that a scheme for rebuilding by this firm is under appeal for licence. If this licence is not granted I shall have to advise the Council to press for a reconstruction of the lavatory accommodation and sewage disposal at this mill, if this is not done the stream, particularly in conditions of low summer water, may become a serious menace to the town's health.

I hope, as soon as supplies are more possible, that milk producers will install pasteurizing plant. The destruction of tuberculosis germs is somewhat controversial, but there is no doubt whatever that this treatment saves a great deal of bowel infection, particularly in children.

Another desirable activity will be the serving of all milk in sealed bottles.

Local sale and manufacture of ice cream appears to be quite satisfactory, the same applies to slaughter houses.

As regards housing we all know the position.

There are a large number of houses in the town which would be much better pulled down, I refer particularly to Causeway Terrace, West End Cottages, Channel View and Laurel Cottages, these are only tolerated because there is no other accommodation available or possible.

I am sometimes told by members of the public that this or that house should be condemned, and I usually fully agree, but the public seldom realise that the condemnation of a house means nothing can be done to alleviate its state for the sake of its inhabitants.

There is one item I forgot to mention earlier, and that is scabies, there has been no epidemic, but we have always with us sporadic cases which are most efficiently dealt with by the District Nurses, to whom I should like to offer my great appreciation of invaluable services.

Owing to present National conditions desirable action is, in a large proportion of cases, impossible, and therefore many undesirable living conditions have to be tolerated which would otherwise demand prompt action.

This is bound up intimately with the housing problem.

The health of the town can only be described as moderate; so far as notifiable diseases are concerned, with the exception of tuberculosis, I can only speak for the period from October 1st;

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there were only two, both of which were admitted to hospital, one scarlet fever, and one polymyositis.

Tuberculosis notifications for the twelve months ending December 31st were fourteen in all, with one death, twelve of these being respiratory, that is of the lungs.

In my opinion this does not, by any means, cover the amount of tuberculosis prevalent. There is an appreciable number of tuberculosis of glands of the neck and the abdomen which may never be seen by a doctor.

Earlier in the year there was a fairly widespread epidemic of measles, of a singularly mild type, and almost entirely free from the usual complications, lungs and ears. This may be due to the use of drugs of the Sulphanilamide series as a routine.

There has been a very large amount of illness of the digestive system, and a large amount of skin disease, the number of cases of gastric and duodenal ulcer are increasing. In my opinion these two classes of illness are considerably influenced by eight years of malnutrition, and by the general difficulty and stress of life.

I find that an appreciable number of young men find it necessary to seek medical advice at approximately two years after demobilisation, invariably having lost considerable weight, I am again led to consider the effect of civilian rations and living.

What would normally be a mild illness, incapacitating the patient for work for seven to ten days, now keeps him off for probably at least three weeks.

MYLES TONKS.



